

Electric Customers Need To Know What They'll Pay
To The Editor Of The Day:

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Electric rates will go up across the state next January. The public does not know just what to expect, because of the Department of Public Utility Control's decision to disregard the Oct. 1 deadline set by our lawmakers for announcing electric prices for 2007.

My office filed a motion with the DPUC on Sept. 15 urging the DPUC to publicly disclose the 2007 prices for customers of The Connecticut Light and Power Company (CL&P) and The United Illuminating Co. (UI) as soon as possible. On Tuesday, Oct. 4, the DPUC denied our motion. However, all four reasons we gave for prompt disclosure of the new rates remain valid:

- • The law still says Oct. 1 is the deadline for DPUC to disclose.
- • The public needs time to prepare for increased prices by budgeting and using energy-efficiency measures.
- • Electric suppliers need time to prepare new competitive offerings for 2007.
- • Future power auctions should be improved if losing bidders learn what it takes to make winning offers to CL&P and UI.

Substantial rate hikes are imminent. Publicly available information already indicates that the magnitude of the increases will be in the range of 20 percent for CL&P customers and 40-50 percent for UI customers. This is another reason the time for full and accurate disclosure is now.

Electric customers deserve complete information on what to expect come Jan. 1, 2007.

Editor's note: The writer is Connecticut's consumer counsel in the Office of Consumer Counsel.

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